



Captain Clark with sextant
Drawing by: © 2001 Michael Haynes

Up the Missouri...

July 11, 1804: The Expedition made only six miles. They passed Little Tarkio Creek. Clark got out on shore following fresh horse tracks, eventually finding the horse on a sand beach. They camped on an island opposite the Nemaha River and the hunters returned with six deer. Lewis took astronomical observations that evening with the sextant.

July 12, 1804: The Expedition decided to remain at the campsite on this day to take observations and refresh the men. Clark and five men ascend the Nemaha in a pirogue for a few miles. Clark observed many burial mounds near the bluffs, and noted thickets of grapes, plums, crabapples, and cherries.

... on a Sandstone Bluff about ¼ of a mile from its mouth on the Lower Side I observed Some Indian marks, went to the rock which jutted over the water and marked my name & the day of the month & year... Clark

At 1:00 p.m. a court martial was convened and found Alexander Willard guilty of "Lying down and Sleeping on his post whilst a Sentinal, on the night of the 11th". Willard's punishment was 100 lashes (25 a night for 4 nights).

July 13, 1804: The Expedition made 20 ½ miles this day, the greatest single day distance yet covered. They were able to sail all day assisted by a southerly wind. The party killed several geese.



Air Rifle (Lukens Gun),
Stewart Collection, VMI Museum, Lexington, Virginia

July 14, 1804: The Expedition made 9 miles this day. Hard showers and wind delayed their departure until 7 am, but the worst of the storm occurred a half hour later. A violent wind struck the boat broadside nearly swamping her.

...Came a Dredfulle hard Storme from the South which Lasted for about one ouer and half which Cosed us to jump out and hold hir... Floyd

Later they noted passing the Nishnabotna River (its mouth probably several miles downstream than present day). In the small prairies Clark noted summer grapes, plums, and gooseberries. Several men have boils.

Mooring & Anchoring

Never set an anchor in the fast flowing river channel. Current can pull you under and debris (e.g. logs) floating under the surface can hook your line and draw you under in an instant. It can also be difficult to unhook the anchor from submerged obstacles you can't see. Be sure you can quickly cut or detach the anchor line on your boat if you need to.

If you do anchor in the river, pick your anchorage carefully out of the channel and current. Remember to use a bowline and keep your bow into the wind or current. This will minimize the risk of being swamped by water coming over the transom or back of the boat. The anchor line should be at least seven times as long as the depth of the water in which the boat is moored.

Never attempt to moor to stationary objects such as dikes and moored barges and never approach these objects from upstream. Swift flowing water over, under and around these objects create currents that may overturn your boat and pull you under.

When stopping, turn your boat upstream into the current and cut the throttle to an idle. The throttle setting will vary with the speed of the current.

Always land your boat facing upstream and pull in parallel to the riverbank. If you try to land facing downstream or perpendicular to the bank, the current will pivot the boat. A two-point tie off should be used to keep the prop out of the rock and prevent its contact with the bank.

Boat Ramps & Public Land

River Access (Boat Ramps)	Toilets	Camping	River Mile	Owner	Stream
Indian Cave	Y	N	518.0	NGPC	Missouri River
Langdon Bend	Y	Y	534.5	MDC	Missouri River
Rulo Park	Y	N	497.6	City of Rulo	Missouri River
Thurnau	Y	Y	508.5	MDC	Missouri River

Public Lands and Parks	Toilets	Camping	Ownership/ Management
Big Lake State Park	Y	Y	MDNR
Bilby Ranch Lake, Conservation Area	Y	Y	MDC
Corning, Mitigation Site	N	N	USACE
Deroin Bend, Conservation Area and Mitigation Site	N	Y	USACE/MDC
Hoot Owl Bend, Conservation Area	Y	Y	MDC
Indian Cave State Park	Y	Y	NGPC
Langdon Bend, Mitigation Site	N	N	USACE
Little Tarkio Prairie, Conservation Area	N	Y	MDC
McCormack, Conservation Area	N	Y	MDC
Rush Bottom Bend, Mitigation Site	N	N	USACE
Squaw Creek, National Wildlife Refuge	N	N	USFWS
Thurnau, Mitigation Site	Y	Y	USACE/MDC

The Return...

September 10, 1806: The Expedition proceeded 65 miles this day. They met four men in a small pirogue bound for the Platte River. The men were extremely friendly and gave the expedition a bottle of whiskey. A few miles further downstream they met another pirogue of seven men from St. Louis bound for the Omahas. The river was crowded with snags and sawyers, because of the low water it was difficult to steer through the maze.



Missouri River from Thurnau Conservation Area, Missouri
Photo by: Pat Whalen

